

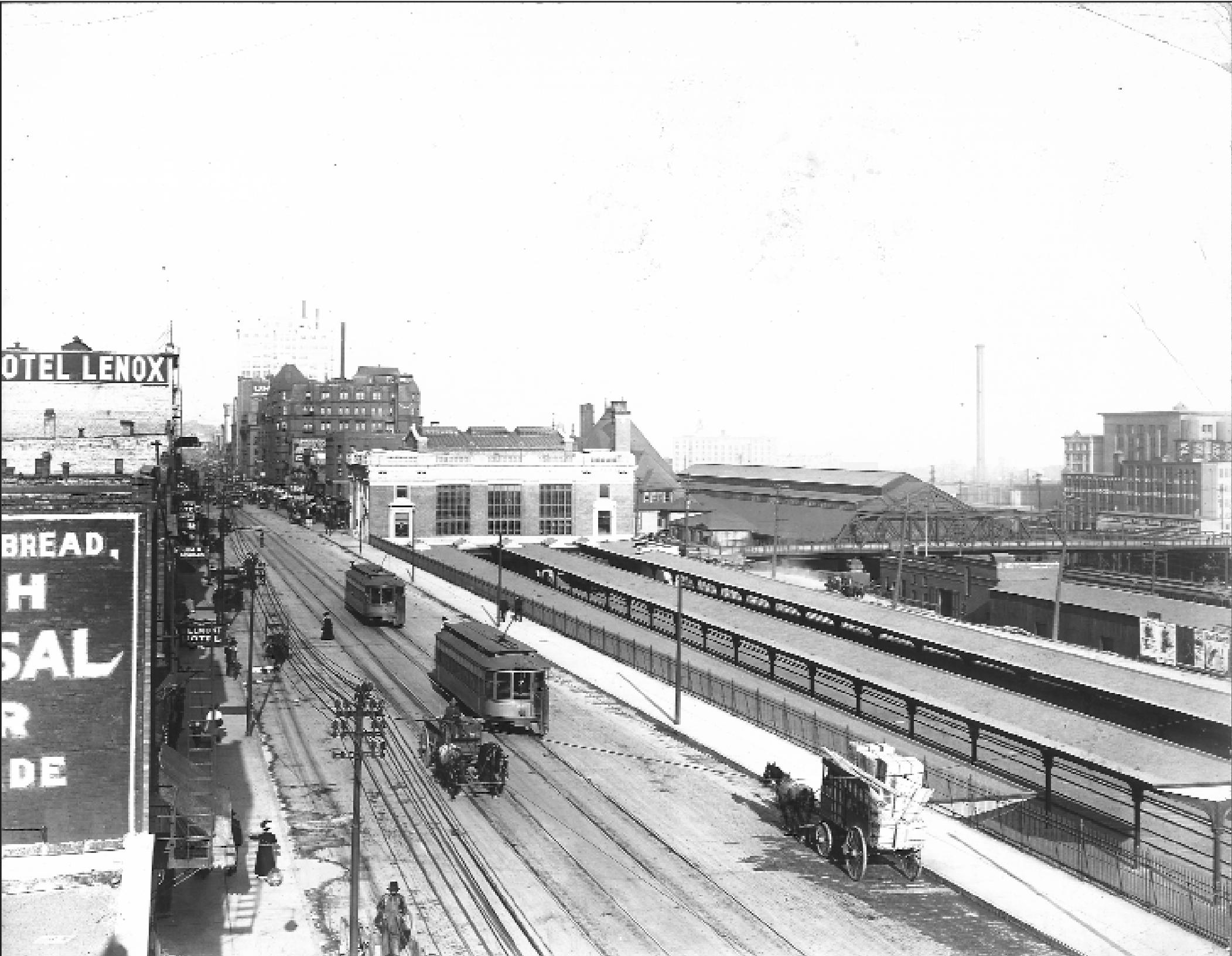
TWIN CITY LINES

Summer 2011



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TWIN CITY LINES

Twin City Lines is published quarterly by the

Minnesota Streetcar Museum
P. O. Box 14467 University Station
Minneapolis, MN 55414-0467
(952) 922-1096
www.trolleyride.org

Vol. 5. No. 3

Aaron Isaacs, Editor
3816 Vincent Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55410
612-929-7066
aaronmona@aol.com

Twin City Lines is published quarterly and is mailed to members in good standing without charge under Third Class postal permit.

The Minnesota Streetcar Museum operates the Como-Harriet Streetcar Line in Minneapolis and the Excelsior Streetcar Line in Excelsior. Its mission is to preserve Minnesota's electric railway heritage.

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STOPPING DISTANCES OF STREET CARS

Note: TESTED SAFETY STOPPING DISTANCES.

P.C.C. TYPE STREET CARS

10 miles per hour requires 27 feet.

15 miles per hour requires 47 feet.

20 miles per hour requires 72 feet.

25 miles per hour requires 102 feet.

30 miles per hour requires 132 feet.

OLD TYPE STREET CARS

10 miles per hour requires 36 feet.

15 miles per hour requires 66 feet.

20 miles per hour requires 101 feet.

25 miles per hour requires 146 feet.

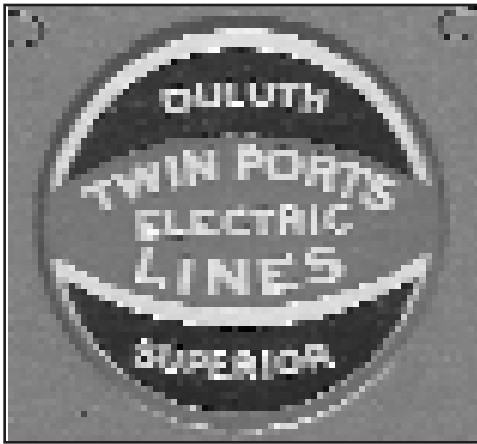
30 miles per hour requires 191 feet.

TWIN
CITY
LINES

Front cover: This issue features the Interstate streetcar line between Duluth and Superior. In 1918, the railroad approach to the Duluth end of the Interstate Bridge burned. This photo, taken before it was restored, shows how streetcars used the outrigger road hung on the outside of the bridge. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

Inside front cover: All of Duluth's streetcars except three shuttles funneled through Superior Street between 3rd and 8th Avenue W. At about 6th Avenue W., a pair of eastbound cars pass the Soo Line depot. The Union Depot, which today houses the Lake Superior Railroad Museum is visible at right.

Above: This card advised TCRT motorman how PCC braking differences compared to the less responsive standard cars.



The INTERSTATE LINE

-Aaron Isaacs

The Interstate line that connected Duluth and Superior was definitely a candidate for the most interesting streetcar operation in Minnesota. It was the longest of Minnesota's four interstate streetcars (the others were Fargo-Moorhead, Grand Forks-East Grand Forks and Wahpeton-Breckenridge). What set it apart was the complex, and sometimes problematic, crossing of the harbor.

In the early days, crossing the harbor was neither easy or convenient. At first there was only ferry service. In the winter the harbor froze, so the ferries were replaced with sleds. The Northern Pacific Railroad built the first bridge across the harbor between Duluth and Superior in 1885. There was no road bridge, so anyone travelling across the harbor had to buy a train ticket or take the ferry.

After Duluth's and Superior's fledgling horsecar lines electrified in 1890, connecting them across the harbor became the goal. There were obstacles, however. Duluth's streetcars were standard gauge, while Superior had retained the narrow gauge of its horsecars. There was also no bridge that could accommodate streetcars.

On the Duluth side of the bay, a line

opened in 1892 on Garfield Avenue, running the length of Rice's Point. In 1893 Superior Rapid Transit Company reached the tip of Connor's Point via 3rd Street, Lamborn Avenue and Main Street, and established a ferry terminal. In June 1893, Duluth Street Railway began running the ferry boat Estelle between Rice's Point and the south end of the Tower Bay slip near 3rd and Tower Avenue. The boat made an intermediate stop at Connor's Point and connected with Superior streetcars at both locations.

Even though passengers had to transfer from streetcar to ferry to streetcar to complete their trip, people apparently preferred it to buying a train ticket. According to the Duluth New Tribune, "The street railway and ferry route between Duluth and Superior has encroached so upon the business of the railroad trains that they do not pay. Every 8 minutes an electric car passes...bearing the sign 'Garfield & West Superior', which connects with the swift steam ferries that run to both Connor's Point and the Tower Bay slip. Cars and ferries run from 6 a.m. until midnight, and is becoming more and more popular a ride every day."

Meanwhile Superior Rapid Transit had its own arrangement with a ferry operator to run from Connor's Point all the way to downtown Duluth.

When the harbor froze over in December 1893, halting ferry service, DSR placed in operation an electric ferry sled. This ingenious device was an enclosed streetcar-like body on a scow hull mounted on runners. An electric motor on the shore turned a drum around which was wrapped a cable that pulled the sled back and forth across the ice.

The following winter a different

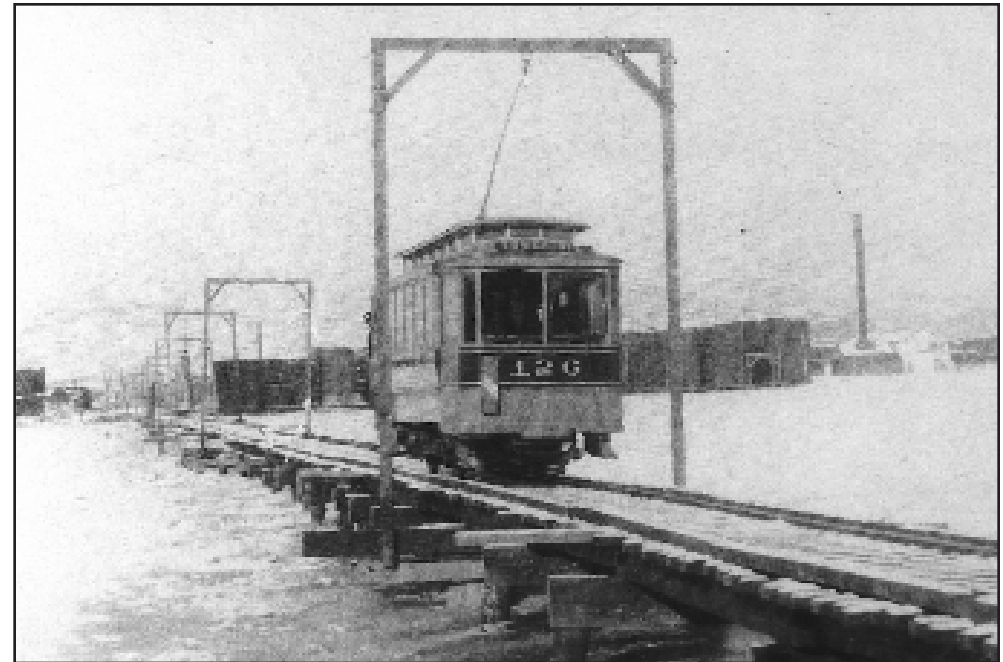
method of crossing the ice was employed. The Commonwealth newspaper described it, "The freezing over of the bay this winter will have a big compensation for people who make frequent trips between Duluth and Superior. Heretofore they have had to walk the 1000 feet or more between the two street car terminals, but this winter there will be no walking. Already a pile driver is at work putting in the foundations for a temporary bridge on which the cars of the Superior Rapid Transit Company will cross to the Duluth side of the bay." The narrow gauge Superior cars weighed less. The trestle served during the winters of 1894-95, 1895-96 and 1896-97, being rebuilt each winter.

The Great Northern Railway finally opened its Interstate bridge on September 1, 1897, connecting Rice's Point in Duluth with Connor's Point in Superior. The bridge was a swing span that allowed lake boats to access St. Louis Bay, the inner portion of the harbor. Trains occupied the center section. Duluth-Superior Traction, which had been organized earlier to accomplish the merger of Duluth and

Superior streetcars, purchased a lease to use the bridge. Separate roadways with streetcar tracks in each direction were hung on the outsides of the main trusses. Once the line was open across the bridge, about 600 feet of track to the former ferry terminal at the tip of Rice's Point was abandoned.

Streetcar service across the bridge did not immediately mean through service between the cities. The Duluth and Superior systems still used different track gauges, so passengers had to change cars at the Superior end of the bridge. Superior Rapid Transit converted its track from the bridge to Tower Avenue and 21st Street on September 30, 1898. Through service to Duluth, jointly operated by both companies, did not begin until March 28, 1899. It took until July 8, 1902 to finish converting the rest of the Superior streetcar lines to standard gauge.

The Interstate Line began on the east end of downtown Duluth and passed through downtown on Superior Street, track it shared with every other line in Duluth, except for the isolated Park Point and Highland lines. It left



During the winters of 1894-1897, Superior streetcars crossed the harbor on temporary trestles across the ice.



East of 3rd Avenue W., Interstate cars shared Superior Street through downtown Duluth with the Lester Park, Crosley, Woodland, and Aerial Bridge lines.



Superior Street at Garfield Avenue and served the rail terminals, grain elevators, coal docks and industries of Rice's Point, then crossed the harbor on the Interstate Bridge

On the Superior side the cars travelled several blocks on Connor's Point before crossing another swing span that carried Lamborn Avenue over the Howard's Pocket ship channel. Traveling west through an industrial area, the line reached Tower Avenue, the commercial spine of Superior. At different times in its history, the Interstate Line traveled all the way to South Superior, to Allouez, and eventually served the short 21st Street branch to Grand Avenue, which opened in 1922. Except for some residential development at the south end of the line in Superior, the Interstate was unusual for serving almost nothing but commercial and industrial neighborhoods.

On the Duluth end it was sometimes extended east of downtown, and for awhile was even through-routed with the Crosley line. This story will concentrate on the central, unchanging portion of the route between the two downtowns.

A trip across the harbor

To better picture what the line was like, let's imagine a trip over it:

Pulling out of the wye at 3rd Avenue E., the Interstate car swings onto Superior Street behind a car that has traveled five miles from Woodland and is headed for the West End. The first few passengers boarded while the car was sitting at its layover on the wye. As it passes through the downtown section of Superior Street, there are crowds of passengers waiting on every corner. They may select any of six different car lines, and three or four board the Interstate car at each stop.

At Lake Avenue, the rails of the short Aerial Bridge line join from the left. 3rd Avenue W. is the junction with the East



Above: A Gary-New Duluth car passes the 7th Avenue Incline base station. Robert Mehlenbeck photo.

Below: Looking west from the same location, a westbound car approaches the Point of Rocks.

Opposite: Interstate cars followed Garfield Avenue, which bisected Rice's Point. The Great Northern's elevated approach to Union Station is at left. The Interstate Bridge is visible in the distance.

4th Street, East 8th Street and Kenwood lines, which drop down a steep grade from the right. This is the busiest spot in the entire system, and a starter is stationed here all day to monitor on-time performance, sell tokens and keep the lines on schedule. He occupies a small wooden booth sitting on the sidewalk.

This is the heart of downtown and your car waits at each corner for two ahead of it to finish loading. After passing the Soo Line and Union Depots, at 7th Avenue W. the first passengers alight to transfer to the Incline. Its base station sits behind the sidewalk and you can look straight up the hill at the Incline tracks. You pass the 8th Avenue W. loop, where streetcars stage and one is waiting to leave for the East End. The track swings left around the Point of Rocks. There is a wye at 12th Avenue W., the tail of which reaches around the corner

so company work cars can access a rock quarry.

At Garfield Avenue is a complex junction. The West Duluth, Grand Avenue and Gary-New Duluth cars continue straight ahead on Superior Street, Piedmont cars angle uphill to the right and the Interstate car turns left to head for Rice's Point and the Interstate Bridge. A long viaduct carries the car over a maze of railroad tracks and down onto Garfield Avenue, which runs between rail yards on the right and docks and warehouses on the left, almost two miles of gritty industry. A pair of railroad spurs that access the Pittsburgh Coal Company dock and grain elevators are crossed at grade. A few passengers headed for work get off along Garfield Avenue, while others board for the trip to Superior. The track in the street swings to the left for two blocks to reach the Interstate Bridge. Your car makes an abrupt right turn







Left top: The west side of Point of Rocks.

Bottom left: At this 3-way junction the Interstate line turned left, the Piedmont line turned right and West Duluth lines continued straight ahead.

Left center: Looking south at the Garfield Avenue viaduct.

Bottom center: A pair of Northern Pacific low-traffic spurs to docks and elevators crossed Garfield Ave. North East Minnesota History Center collection.

Right: Garfield Avenue was a mix of industry and railroad facilities that generated a significant portion of the Interstate line's ridership. Detroit Photographic Company photo, Library of Congress collection.



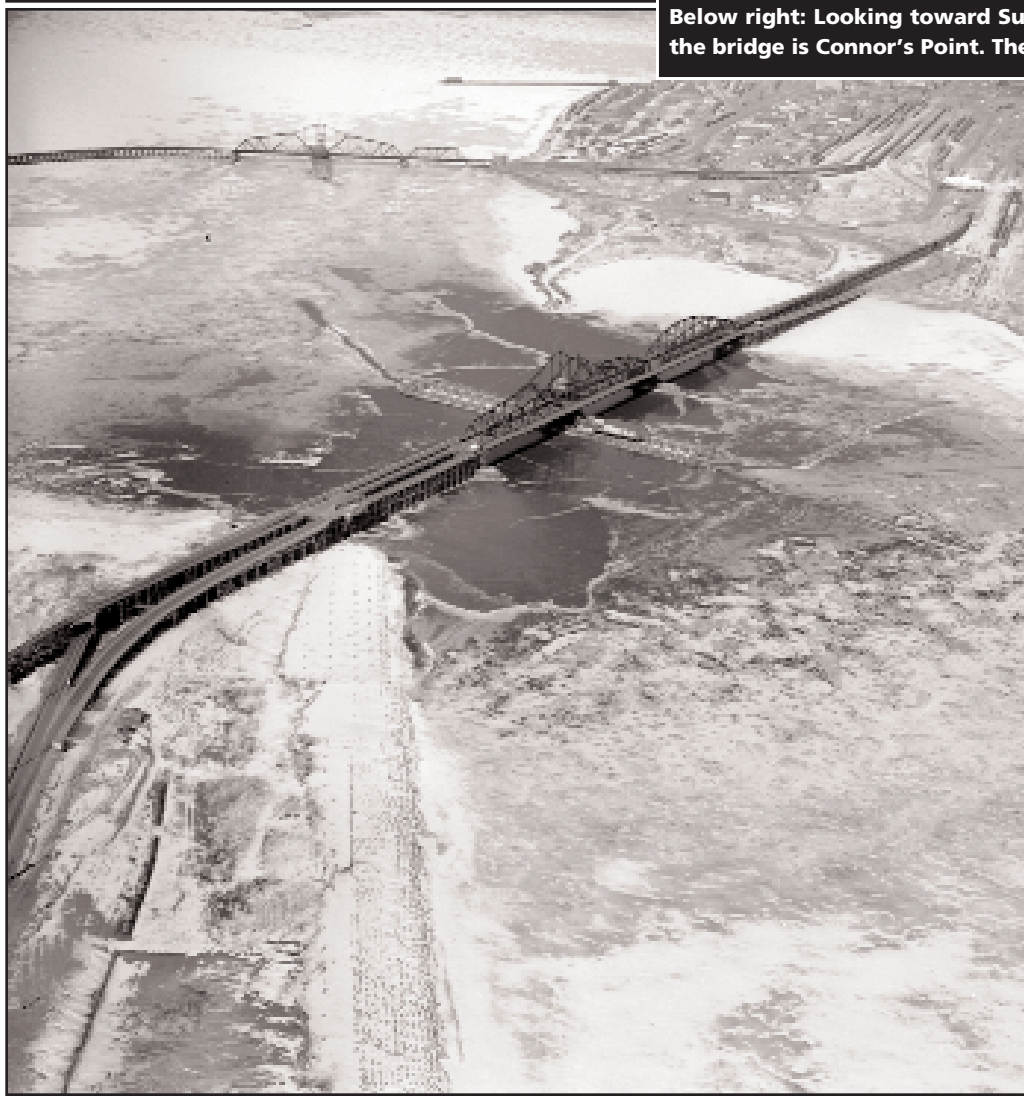


Above left: Garfield Avenue in winter 1916.

Below: Two aerial views of the Interstate Bridge, taken in the 1960s. The fixed through truss on the Superior end has been replaced by trestlework.

Below left: Looking toward Duluth, with the Northern Pacific's Duluth Draw bridge in the distance.

Below right: Looking toward Superior. Projecting into the water to the right of the bridge is the old ferry terminal. Beyond the bridge is Connor's Point. The Lamborn Avenue swing bridge over Howard's Pocket is visible in the open position.



alongside the railroad approach to the bridge, which is on a long trestle that comes in from the left. A loop track splits off to the left and circles under the bridge approach. Its purpose is to turn streetcars before they cross the bridge, useful for shortlining cars when the bridge isn't open. The railroad tracks occupy the center of the bridge. The wood-plank roadway with the streetcar track in it rides an outrigger that hangs on the side of the bridge. The car's wheels bang across

the joints as they enter and leave the bridge's swing span.

Descending to Connor's Point on the Superior side, the streetcar ducks under the railroad's approach trestle and rejoins the other track in the center of Main Street for a couple of blocks. To the left fronting the bay are a coal dock and some warehouses. Minnesota Point stretches along the far side of the bay and beyond that you can see the open lake. On the right is the Howard's Pocket ship channel leading to a



The northbound off-ramp on the Duluth end of the Interstate Bridge, with a closeup (above) of the turn loop that allowed cars to shortline during bridge closures.



Top right: On November 21, 1924, a ship struck the Interstate bridge, dumping it into the bay. Service was restored on December 19.
Bottom right: This derailment on the Superior approach give a good view of Connor's Point and Main Street. The railroad approach is at right.







Opposite page: Four views of Connor's Point and Main Street. The two at far left show the Superior end of the Interstate Bridge. Both Douglas County Historical Society collection.

Below center: The streetcar is headed for Superior and is about to turn from Main Street onto Lamborn Avenue.

This page: The Lamborn Avenue bridge over the Howard's Pocket ship channel.



shipyard and grain elevators. The car turns right onto Lamborn Avenue, pausing before banging over the Soo Line's track leading to its Superior freight house. Then it crosses the ship channel on another wood-decked swing bridge. Angling left for two blocks, the car travels past shipyards and docks before crossing the tracks of the Lake Superior Terminal and Transfer. Just beyond the tracks comes a right turn onto 3rd Street, lined with industrial and commercial buildings. At Ogden Street it passes the streetcar power house and the Superior car house.

A block later comes the left turn onto Tower Avenue, Superior's commercial spine. In two blocks the 6th Street loop, used by some Superior local cars, diverges at left. A few blocks later you cross two more tracks next to the Soo Line and Omaha Road depots and enter the heart of downtown Superior. With two swing bridges and six

railroad grade crossings, there's a good chance that something will delay the car, and as a regular rider you're relieved each time it doesn't happen. Soon the Broadway line tracks diverge to the left, and the Union Depot is visible two blocks to the right.

Now passengers are alighting at every corner. Belknap Street is the heart of the Superior system, with a starter based in a sidewalk booth to keep the cars on schedule. This is the main transfer point. Numerous passengers alight, and a small number get on. The East End/Allouez line, the heaviest local service in Superior, splits off to the left. After several more blocks you reach 21st Street where the Billings Park line turns right. The South Superior line continues straight ahead. At various times in its history, the South Superior line ran by itself, but much of the time it was through-routed with the Interstate line. After the East 21st Street line opened in 1922,

Interstate cars on a 10-minute frequency alternated to serve the 21st Street and South Superior lines every 20 minutes.

On this trip, the Interstate car turns left for its short, one mile run east to the loop at 21st and Grand Avenue. This last stretch is lined with houses. The turn loop sits in an open field next to another set of railroad tracks. The Interstate car has traveled ten miles and carried 32 passengers.

Service levels and bus competition

All across the country, buses appeared in the 1920s to compete with the streetcars. In Duluth, as in the Twin Cities, the streetcar company's strategy was to buy up the buses and run them alongside the streetcars. The Superior White Company started a service that almost duplicated the Interstate Line. In 1925 the bus service was purchased by Northland Transportation, which wanted White's line from Duluth to

Ashland, Wisconsin. A week later, Northland sold the Duluth-Superior service to the streetcar company, which ran it as the Duluth-Superior Coach Company. At some unknown date in the 1920s, another competitor, the Gopher-Badger Bus Company, also began running between Duluth and Superior. DSR's subsidiary Superior Bus Company purchased Gopher-Badger in December 1931 and discontinued the competing service. A month later, Superior City Bus Co. changed its name to Duluth-Superior City Bus Company.

Nov. 21, 1924 the steamer Merton S. Farr struck the Interstate Bridge, knocking the fixed span into the bay. Temporary track was relaid on Garfield Avenue to the old ferry terminal and ferry service began Nov. 23. The railroads implemented hourly passenger train service as an alternative. The bridge was repaired and streetcar operations resumed Dec. 19.



Ridership

The Interstate was that transit company's dream, a route with bi-directional ridership at all times of the day and, at least until about 1930, no extra cars added for the rush hour.

In the MSM collection are detailed ridership counts for the Interstate line from 1926 and 1931. In the transit business these are called load counts (see pages 18-19). A checker stands at the point along the route and estimates the number of passengers on each

The Interstate line followed 3rd Street between Lamborn and Tower Avenues.

Left: 3rd Street at Cummings.

Right: 3rd Street at John. Two blocks ahead the track turns left onto Tower Avenue. Both Douglas County Historical Society collection.

Below: This panoramic view shows the heart of the Tower Avenue commercial district in Superior. Library of Congress collection.





passing streetcar or bus. Counts over several days are averaged and graphed against the number of seats on the cars. The result of a snapshot of ridership versus capacity for each hour and day of the week.

The 1926 counts show ridership as it was before the bottom dropped out of the economy when the Great Depression hit in 1930. Note there is a separate 1926 chart for the Interstate bus, so we can compare bus and streetcar ridership.

The weekday 1926 counts shows peaks of rush hour ridership in both directions, but it's clear that more Superior residents commuted to Duluth than the other way around. Bi-directional ridership in both rush hours was quite different from most of the streetcar lines in the Twin Ports. Economically, the Interstate benefited from charging a double fare, although





Above: Interstate cars pass on Tower Avenue at Broadway, passing under the illuminated steel arch that spanned the intersection. Minnesota Historical Society collection.

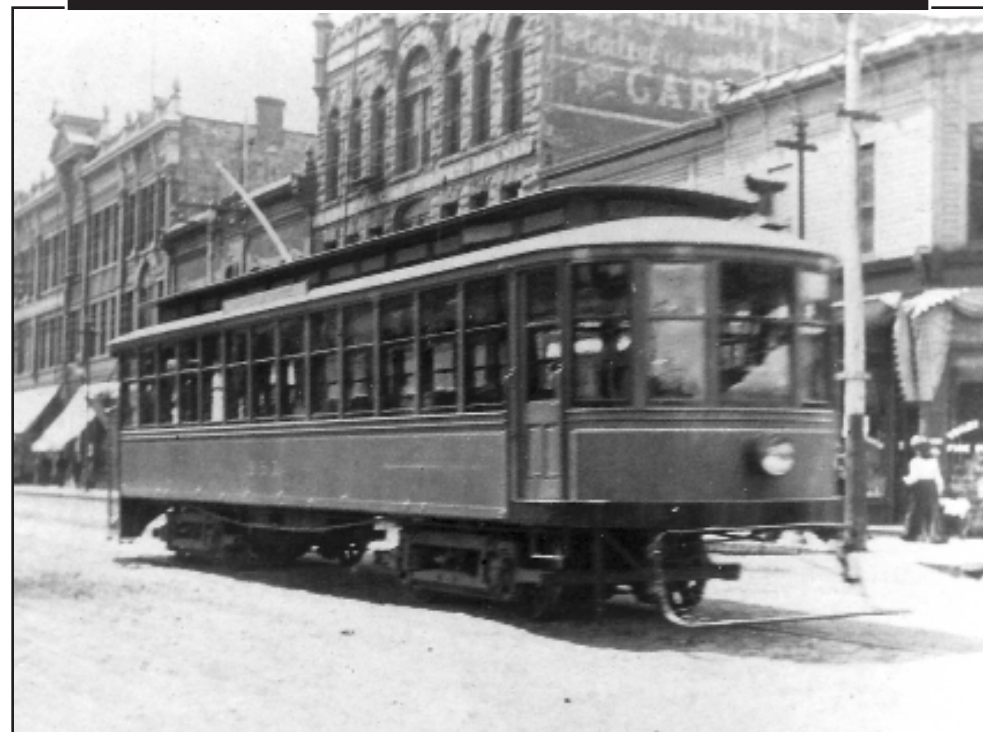
Below: The intersection of Tower Avenue and Belknap Street was the hub and main transfer point for the Superior system. Note the starter's booth at left. Douglas County Historical Society collection.

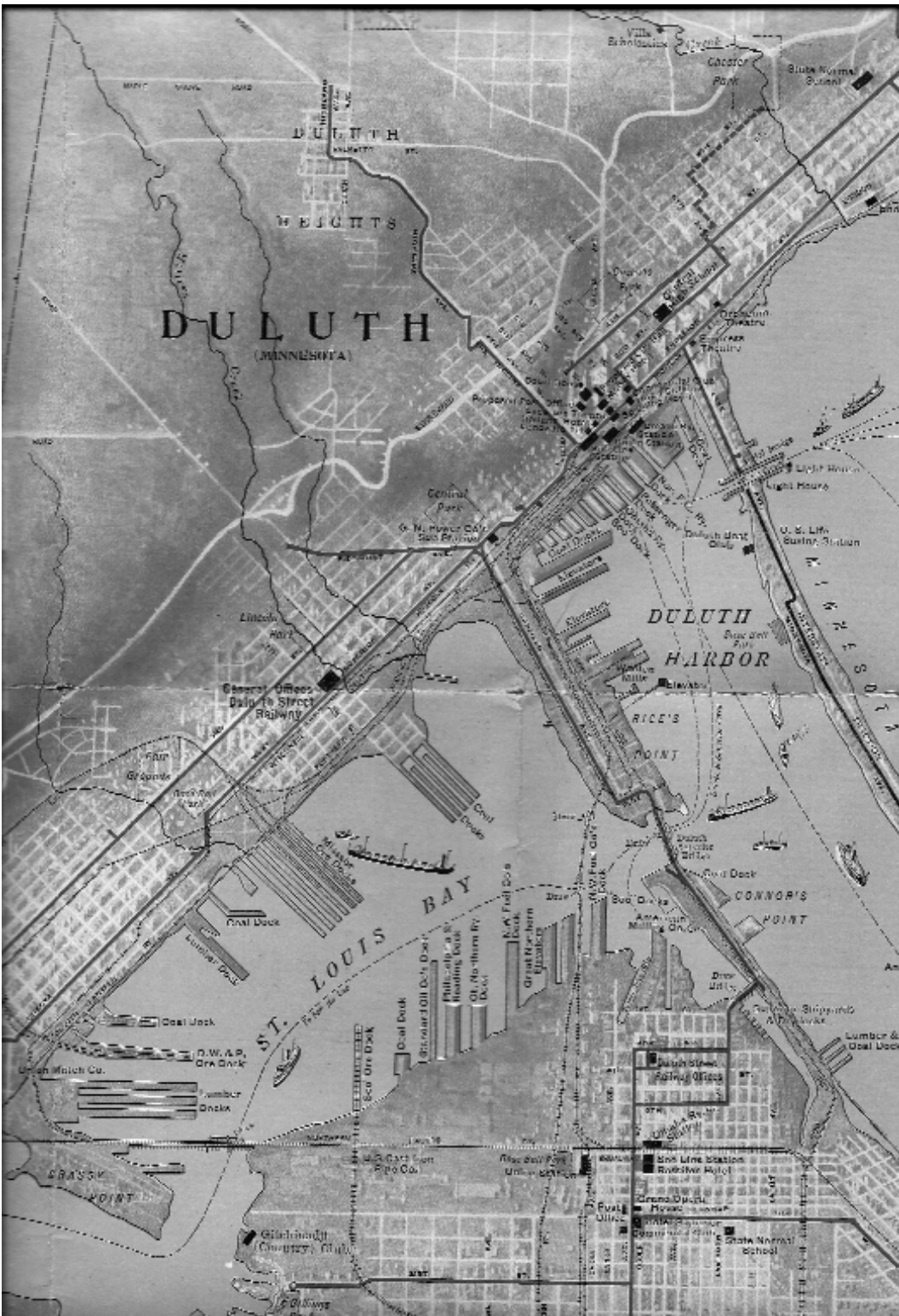


*19th St & Tower Ave. N.
+ PM 6 23 14 HHS*

Above: Tower Avenue turned residential south of downtown. Douglas County Historical Society collection.

Below: The Interstate was the first line to receive Twin City-built double truck streetcars in 1900. This is #151, the first of them.





this was partially offset by the expense of bridge tolls.

In 1926 the track segments that made up the Interstate line carried these daily ridership totals:

6919	on Garfield Avenue
5497	Connor's Point to Tower and 21st Street
2186	South Superior (Tower from 21st to 63rd)
712	East 21st Street line

Those numbers are not cumulative, and part of the Connor's Point to 21st trackage was also serviced by the East End and Broadway-Billings Park lines. According to the same 1926 checks, daily ridership crossing the Interstate Bridge was about 4100. At Garfield Avenue and Michigan Street, a block from the West Duluth main line, there were over 5700 people on the cars. This reflected the fact that Garfield Avenue, with all its employers, was a destination in itself.

As it did everywhere, the proliferation of the automobile ate into ridership all through the 1920s. Bus competition didn't help. The 1926 load check shows the competing Interstate bus carrying over 800 daily riders over the harbor bridge, compared to about 4100 on the streetcars. In 1926 the average streetcar crossed the bridge with 21 passengers aboard.

The Depression hit the Twin Ports hard, dependent as they were on the steel and lumber industries. According to one text, Duluth experienced 40 percent unemployment, the highest among cities of 100,000 or more. Ridership crossing the Interstate Bridge dropped 40 percent from 1930 to 1931.

Furthermore, 1931 ridership was 60 percent below 1926. It's easy to see why the streetcars were imperiled.

Speed limits

Until 1929, the City of Duluth set lower speed limits for streetcars than for automobiles. On Superior Street through downtown, auto were permitted 15-20 miles per hour, while streetcars were restricted to 12 mph. On Garfield Avenue it was 20 for cars, 12 for streetcars. This put the streetcar at a disadvantage when competing with both autos and buses. It also increased operating costs, because more streetcars were required to run the slower schedule. Streetcar travel time from 3rd Avenue W. in Duluth to Tower and Belknap in Superior was 36 minutes in 1919. The competing Interstate bus, which made no local stops between the harbor bridge and downtown Duluth, covered the same distance in 24 minutes. In 1929, the separate streetcar speed limit was eliminated and Interstate streetcars reduced their travel time to about 28 minutes. By that late date, however, the public's impression that streetcars were much slower was established and auto drivers were unlikely to be convinced otherwise.

Fares

The Interstate line did better financially than the rest of the system because passengers traveling between Duluth and Superior had to pay two fares, one in each city. This was required by the city franchises, as it was in Minneapolis-St. Paul on the intercity lines. Initially the fare was 5

Speed Limits

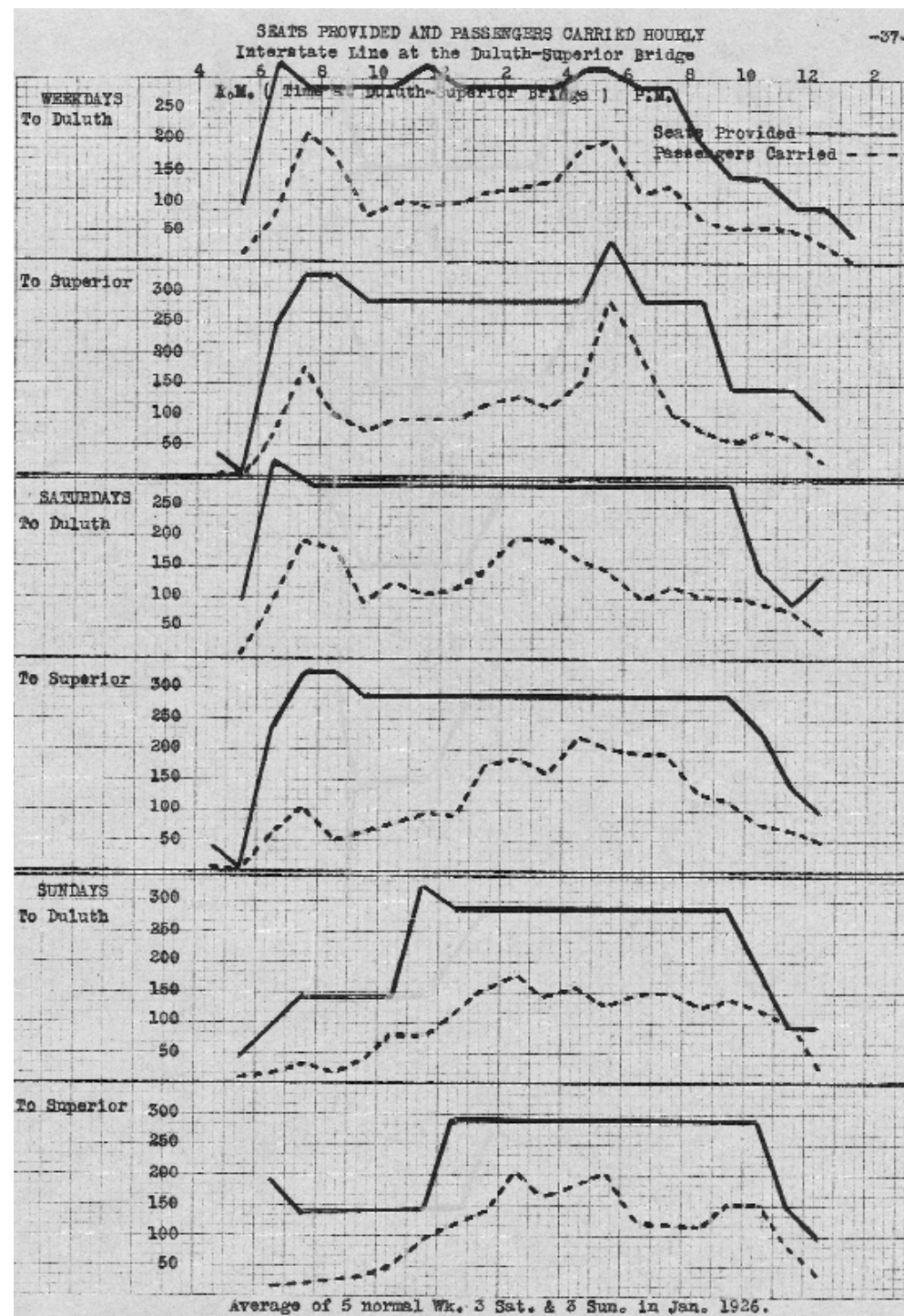
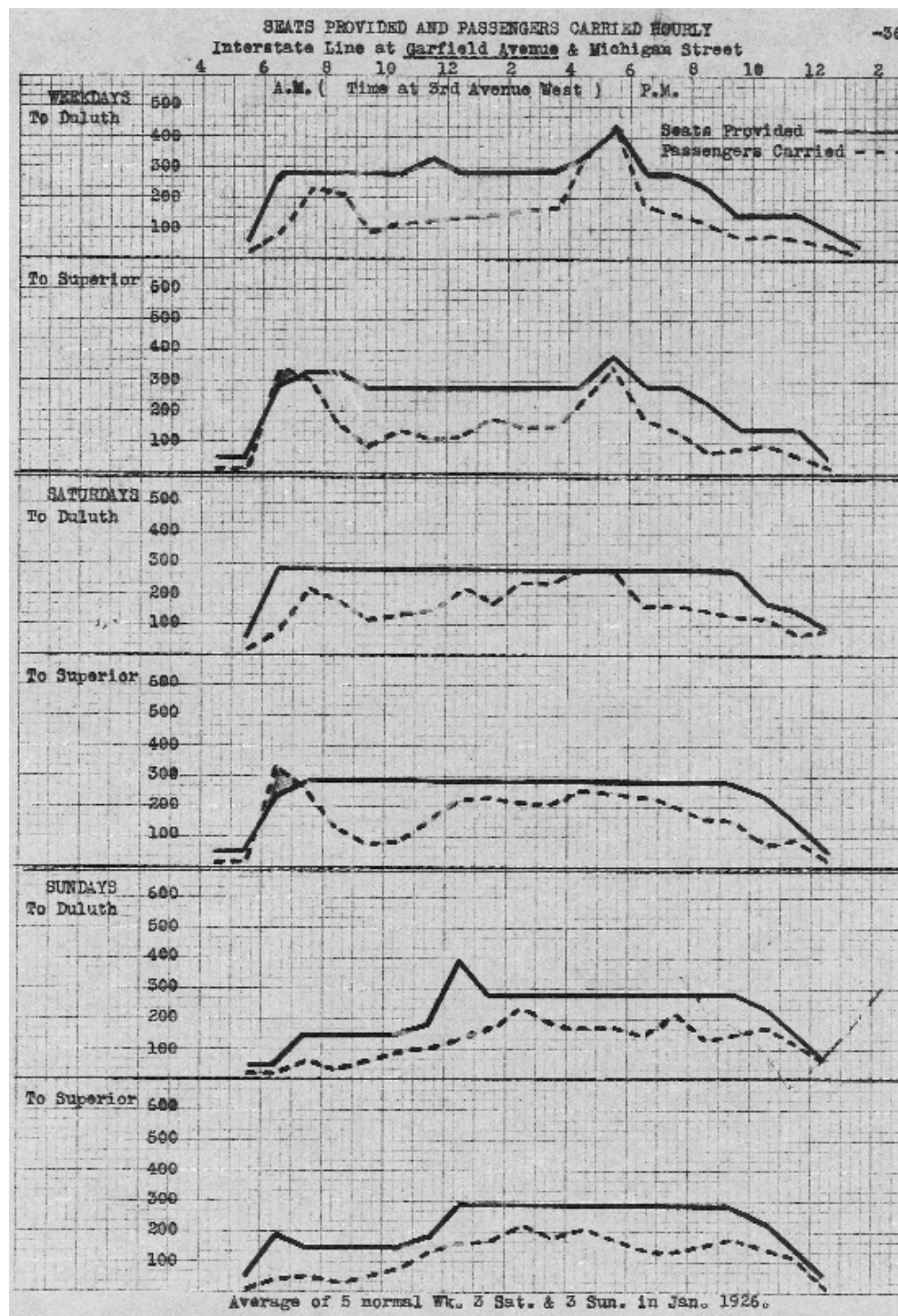
Superior St., 3rd Ave. E-Lake Ave.
Superior St., Lake Ave.- 3rd Ave. W
Superior St., 3rd Ave. W-Garfield
Garfield Ave.

Before 1929

Auto	Streetcar
15	12
20	12
15	12
20	12

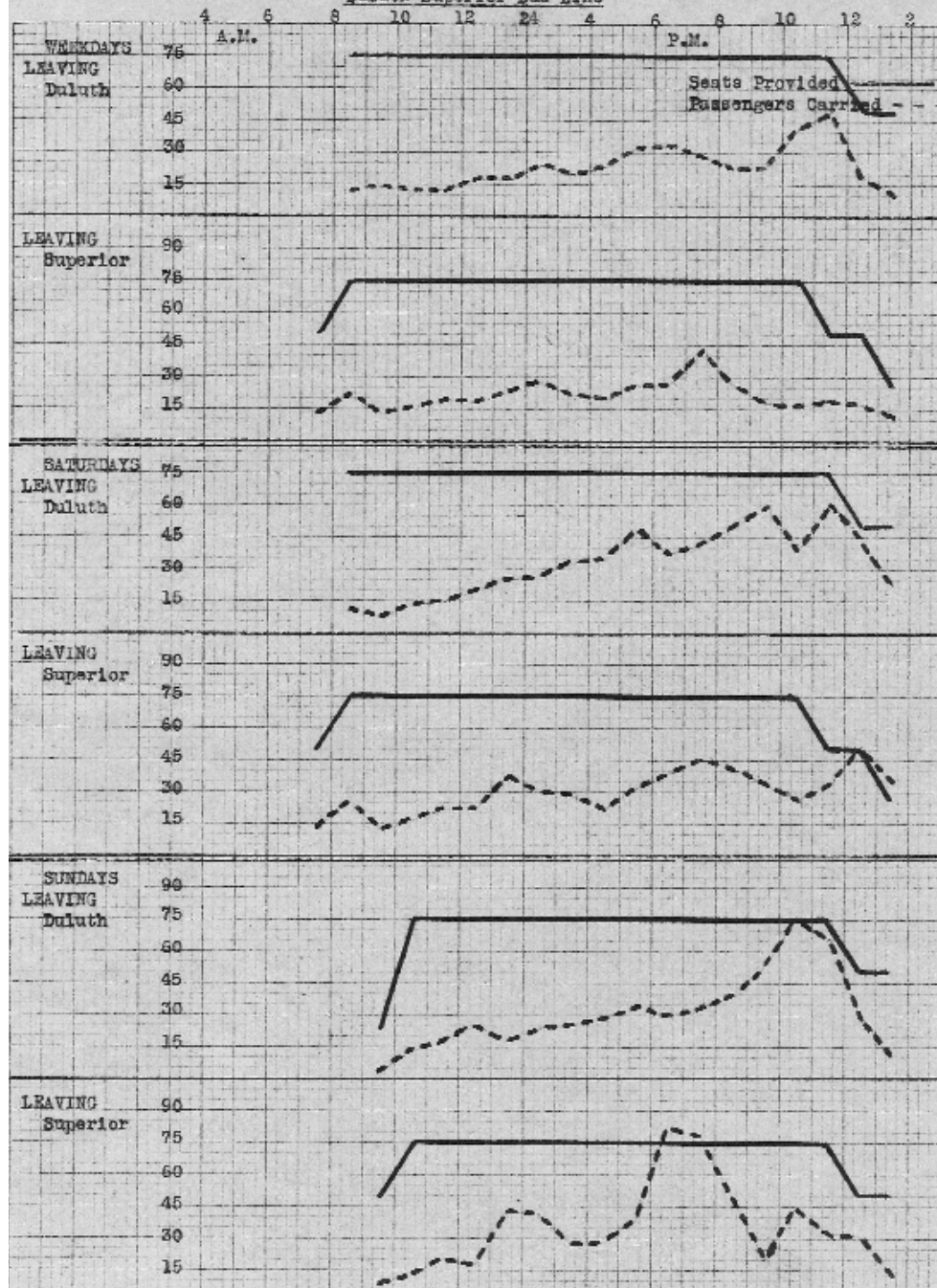
After 1929

Streetcar
15
20
15
20



SEATS PROVIDED AND PASSENGERS CARRIED HOURLY
Duluth-Superior Bus Line

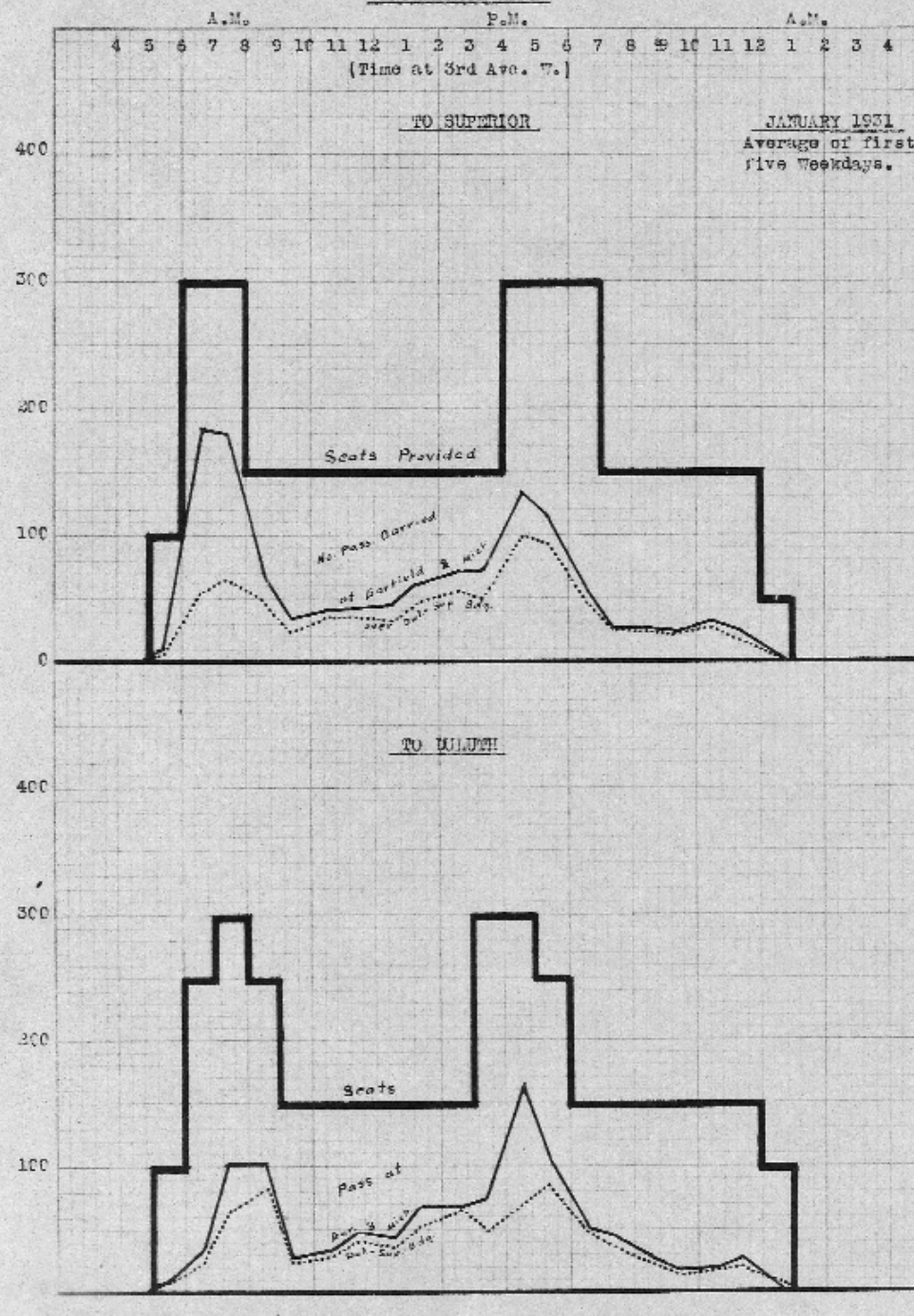
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Average of 5 normal Wk., 3 Sat. & 3 Sun. in Jan. 1925

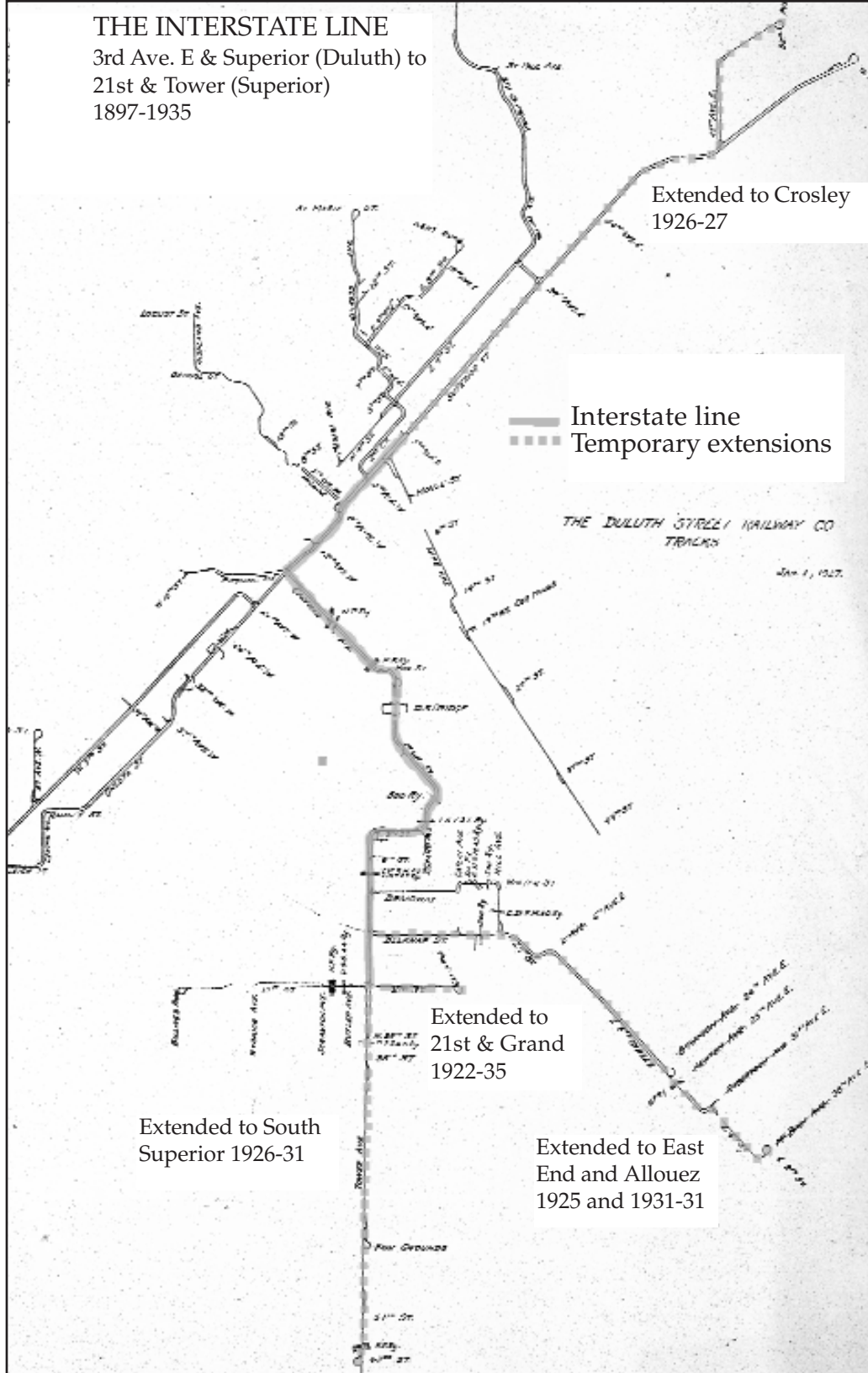
SEATS PROVIDED AND PASSENGERS CARRIED - BY HOURS

INTERSTATE LINE



THE INTERSTATE LINE

3rd Ave. E & Superior (Duluth) to
21st & Tower (Superior)
1897-1935



DULUTH DIVISION

Time Card No. 22

Effective May 1, 1912

INTERSTATE LINE

DULUTH, MINN. TO SUPERIOR, WIS.

TIME CARD No. 22 12 1-59

Run.	TO SUPERIOR					TO DULUTH				
	3rd & E. W.	3rd & W. W.	Garfield & S. P. S.	Oregon & S. P. S.	Belknap St.	3rd Ave. E. S.	3rd Ave. W. S.	Garfield & S. P. S.	Grand & S. P. S.	
11 A.M.						7:12	7:12	7:12	7:12	
11:01						7:15	7:15	7:15	7:15	
11:03						7:18	7:18	7:18	7:18	
11:05						7:21	7:21	7:21	7:21	
11:07						7:24	7:24	7:24	7:24	
11:09						7:27	7:27	7:27	7:27	
11:11						7:30	7:30	7:30	7:30	
11:13						7:33	7:33	7:33	7:33	
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11:17						7:39	7:39	7:39	7:39	
11:19						7:42	7:42	7:42	7:42	
11:21						7:45	7:45	7:45	7:45	
11:23						7:48	7:48	7:48	7:48	
11:25						7:51	7:51	7:51	7:51	
11:27						7:54	7:54	7:54	7:54	
11:29						7:57	7:57	7:57	7:57	
11:31						8:00	8:00	8:00	8:00	
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1:09						10:27	10:27	10:27	10:27	
1:11						10:30	10:30	10:30	10:30	
1:13						10:33	10:33	10:33	10:33	
1:15						10:36	10:36	10:36	10:36	
1:17						10:39	10:39	10:39	10:39	
1:19						10:42	10:42	10:42	10:42	
1:21						10:45	10:45	10:45	10:45	
1:23						10:48	10:48	10:48	10:48	
1:25						10:51	10:51	10:51	10:51	
1:27						10:54	10:54	10:54	10:54	
1:29						10:57	10:57	10:57	10:57	
1:31						11:00	11:00	11:00	11:00	
1:33						11:03	11:03	11:03	11:03	
1:35						11:06	11:06	11:06	11:06	
1:37						11:09	11:09	11:09	11:09	
1:39						11:12	11:12	11:12	11:12	
1:41						11:15	11:15	11:15	11:15	
1:43						11:18	11:18	11:18	11:18	
1:45						11:21	11:21	11:21	11:21	
1:47						11:24	11:24	11:24	11:24	
1:49						11:27	11:27	11:27	11:27	
1:51						11:30	11:30	11:30	11:30	
1:53						11:33	11:33	11:33	11:33	
1:55						11:36	11:36	11:36	11:36	
1:57						11:39	11:39	11:39	11:39	
1:59						11:42	11:42	11:42	11:42	
2:01						11:45	11:45	11:45	11:45	
2:03						11:48	11:48	11:48	11:48	
2:05						11:51	11:51	11:51	11:51	
2:07						11:54	11:54	11:54	11:54	
2:09						11:57	11:57	11:57	11:57	
2:11						12:00	12:00	12:00	12:00	
2:13						12:03	12:03	12:03	12:03	
2:15						12:06	12:06	12:06	12:06	
2:17						12:09	12:09	12:09	12:09	
2:19						12:12	12:12	12:12	12:12	
2:21						12:15	12:15	12:15	12:15	
2:23						12:18	12:18	12:18	12:18	
2:25						12:21	12:21	12:21	12:21	
2:27						12:24	12:24	12:24	12:24	
2:29						12:27	12:27	12:27	12:27	
2:31						12:30	12:30	12:30	12:30	
2:33						12:33	12:33	12:33	12:33	
2:35						12:36	12:36	12:36	12:36	
2:37						12:39	12:39	12:39	12:39	
2:39						12:42	12:42	12:42	12:42	
2:41						12:45	12:45	12:45	12:45	
2:43						12:48	12:48	12:48	12:48	
2:45						12:51	12:51	12:51	12:51	
2:47						12:54	12:54	12:54	12:54	
2:49						12:57	12:57	12:57	12:57	
2:51						1:00	1:00	1:00	1:00	
2:53						1:03	1:03	1:03	1:03	
2:55						1:06	1:06	1:06	1:06	
2:57						1:09	1:09	1:09	1:09	
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3:05						1:21	1:21	1:21	1:21	
3:07						1:24	1:24	1:24	1:24	
3:09						1:27	1:27	1:27	1:27	
3:11						1:30	1:30	1:30	1:30	
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3:19						1:42	1:42	1:42	1:42	
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3:53						2:33	2:33	2:33	2:33	
3:55						2:36	2:36	2:36	2:36	
3:57						2:39	2:39	2:39	2:39	
3:59						2:42	2:42	2:42	2:42	
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4:03						2:48	2:48	2:48	2:48	
4:05						2:51	2:51	2:51	2:51	
4:07						2:54	2:54	2:54	2:54	
4:09						2:57	2:57	2:57	2:57	
4:11						3:00	3:00	3:00	3:00	
4:13						3:03	3:03	3:03	3:03	
4:15						3:06	3:06	3:06	3:06	
4:17						3:09	3:09	3:09	3:09	
4:19										



These small buses ran the Interstate bus that competed directly with the streetcars. The bus charged a higher fare, but offered a faster ride with fewer stops.

Lower right: Duluth and Superior transfers



Carrying the mail

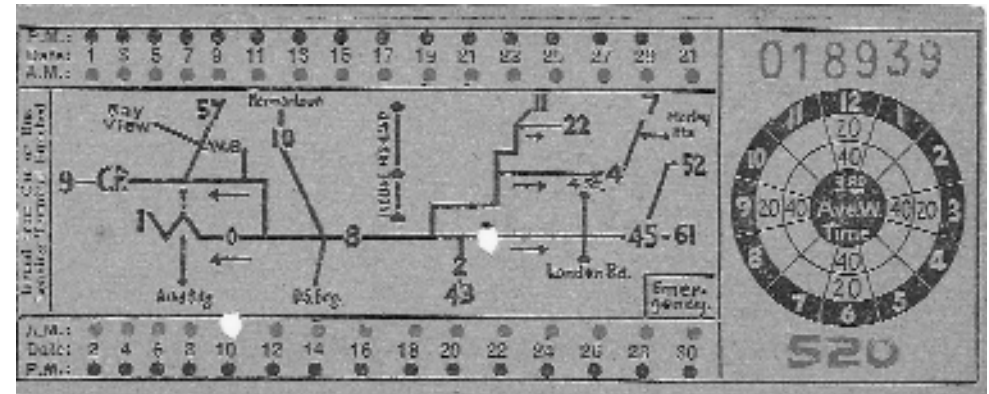
As they did in the Twin Cities, Duluth streetcars carried closed pouch mail between post offices. The Main Duluth post office was located a block up the hill from Superior Street at 5th Avenue W. A post office wagon brought mailbags down to 3rd Avenue W. and Superior where they were loaded on streetcars in the presence of the streetcar starter who was based there. Deliveries to Superior via the Interstate line varied over the years. A 1920 company memo says that mail went from Duluth to the East End, Allouez, Billings Park and South Superior post offices. This would have required transferring the mail to other streetcars in downtown Superior. A 1928 memo lists only a single daily mail trip from Duluth to the Downtown Superior post office,

located on Tower Avenue near 21st Street. Mail service was discontinued in 1930.

Route chronology

Over its 38-year existence, the Interstate Line went through many changes.

The first streetcar line serving Garfield Avenue on Rice's Point opened in 1892. Initially it was routed via 18th Avenue W. and Michigan Street to Garfield. In the 1.9 miles on Rice's Point it crossed 16 railroad tracks at grade. It was also partially single track. This became an operational bottleneck--frequent train delays combining with single track hampered operations. When it became part of the much busier Interstate line in 1897, it must have been almost impossible to keep streetcars on schedule.



ILLUSTRATE		LOCAL	
ALLOWEZ		ALLOWEZ	
EAST END		EAST END	
BILLINGS' PK.		BILLINGS' PK.	
21st & GRAND		21st & GRAND	
ARMORY		ONE & OGDEN	
Line From Which Injured			
A.M.			
P.M.			
DAY OF MONTH			
11 22			
12 23			
13 24			
14 25			
15 26			
16 27			
17 28			
18 29			
19 30			
20 31			
21			

How to See Duluth and Superior

YOU can reach nearly every point of interest in and around Duluth and Superior, as well as their desirable residence sections, over the well-equipped Electric Car Lines of The Duluth Street Railway. The fare on all local lines in each city is 5 cents, with universal transfers. From any point in Duluth to any point in Superior, 10 cents.

The Company operates 80 miles of track and its equipment and service, in every respect, are the best that money, skill, and consideration for patrons can provide.

Every known device for the comfort, convenience, and safety of passengers is employed. The tracks are heavy and smooth. Most of the lines are equipped with large 40-foot Cars of modern and expensive construction, representing the last word in the Car building art. The Cars are roomy, easy-riding, comfortable, and handsomely finished. They are mounted on heavy double trucks and equipped with powerful motors, air-brakes, whistles, and electric signal bells, as well as being brilliantly illuminated. Easy, spring-cane seats are provided. In cold weather, the Cars are heated with hot water and provided with storm sash. In warm weather, their large, deep windows insure the freest circulation of air. There are no better built or more comfortable Electric Cars anywhere than those of The Duluth Street Railway.

The following table gives a list of interesting places to see in both cities, and also answers questions as to distance, time, and fare.

Car Trips in Duluth—From Superior St. and 3d Ave., W.—In Center of Duluth

PLACES TO VISIT	Distance (Miles)	Minutes Each Way	Fare Each Way	Minutes for Rtd Trip	TAKEN CAR MARKED
Superior, Wisconsin,	24	10	10 Cents	20	Duluth and Superior.
Aerial Bridge,	1/2	10	5 Cents	20	W. Dul. and Aerial Bridge.
Minnesota Park,	2 1/2	10	7 Cents	20	East End, Woodland, Lakeside.
East End—Woodstock,	2 1/2	10	5 Cents	20	Woodland.
Harbor Park—Residence,	4	20	5 Cents	40	Lakeside.
Lester Park—Fish Hatchery,	5	20	5 Cents	40	E. 4th and Grand Ave. E. 4th and 5th Ave. W. W. 4th and Midway.
High School Building,	5	10	5 Cents	10	E. 4th and Grand Ave. E. 4th and 5th Ave. W. W. 4th and Midway.
Chesler Park,	1 1/2	20	5 Cents	20	W. 4th and Midway.
Cascade Park—1 1/2 Miles N. of City, "Hill Top"—Trolley,	1 1/2	20	5 Cents	20	Any W-bound Car Trans-fer to Duluth at 5th Ave. W.
Linn Park,	2	10	5 Cents	20	E. 4th and 5th Ave. W. E. 4th and Grand Ave.
Fairmont Park,	5	20	5 Cents	40	E. 4th and Grand Ave.
Marine One Ducks,	2 1/2	10	5 Cents	40	W. Dul. and Aerial Bridge.
West Duluth,	5	10	5 Cents	20	W. Dul. and Aerial Bridge. W. Dul. to 3d Ave. E.

Car Information

In Duluth, at the corner of Superior St. and 3d Ave. W., and in Superior, at the corner of Tower Ave. and Belknap St., "Car Station" Booths will be found, at which you can get definite, reliable information regarding the service of The Duluth Street Railway.

You are also invited to telephone, call out, or write to:

HERBERT WARREN, Gen'l Manager.

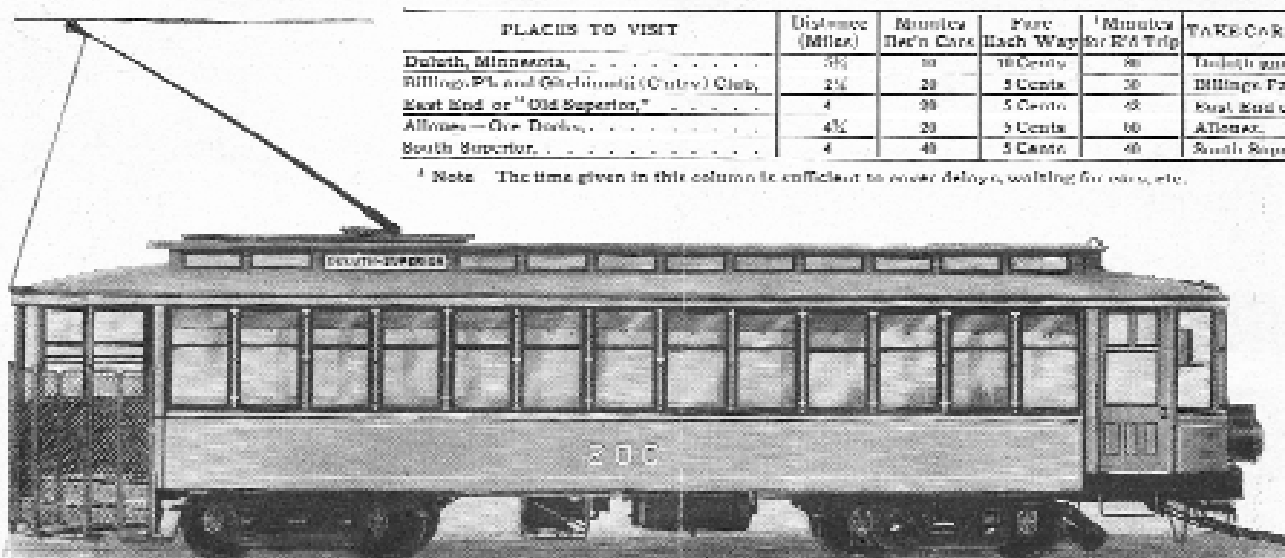
General Office,
281 West Superior St., Duluth.

Telephones,
Duluth, Melrose 251,
Superior, Lincoln 35.

Car Trips in Superior—From Tower Ave. and Belknap St.—In Center of Superior

PLACES TO VISIT	Distance (Miles)	Minutes Each Way	Fare Each Way	Minutes for Rtd Trip	TAKEN CAR MARKED
Duluth, Minnesota,	24	10	10 Cents	20	Duluth and Superior.
Billings Park and Golf Course (Country Club),	2 1/2	20	5 Cents	20	Billings Park.
East End or "Old Superior,"	4	20	5 Cents	40	East End or Allouez.
Allouez—One Ducks,	4 1/2	20	5 Cents	40	Allouez.
South Superior,	4	40	5 Cents	40	South Superior.

¹ Note: The time given in this column is sufficient to cover delays, waiting for cars, etc.



This situation continued until 1902 when the line was rerouted via Superior Street to the newly opened bridge that carried Garfield Avenue over the busiest 11 tracks. By the end of 1903 the remaining single track on Garfield Avenue had been replaced with double track, dramatically improving service reliability.

Following the opening of the harbor bridge in 1897, the Interstate Line ran from 22nd Avenue E. in Duluth to 21st and Tower in Superior. In February 1919 it was temporarily extended to 24th Avenue E. during the rush hours to help out the Lester Park and Woodland cars. When the navigation season returned, it was cut back to 3rd Avenue E., but ran with the same number of streetcars. The extra layover time was a cushion to offset delays when the swing bridges opened for ships. This recognized the line's high potential for delays due to its two swing bridges and nine railroad grade crossings.

It was a sign of the line's status that it was the first to receive the new large double-truck cars supplied by TCRT in 1901. The first 12 cars equipped the Interstate.

In 1922 the line was extended to 21st and Grand in Superior over the newly opened mile-long East 21st Street line.

At various times there was public demand to through-route the Interstate with the East End-Allouez line in Superior. This was first attempted during April-July 1925, with 10-minute service to the East End (Robertson Ave.), and 20-minute service beyond to Allouez. However, the additional mileage, plus three more railroad grade crossings, made the service unreliable and the experiment was cancelled.

In 1926 the Interstate was through-routed with the new Crosley line, which branched off the Lester Park line at 45th Avenue E. This was done to minimize the cost of running the Crosley cars, because they duplicated the service on East Superior Street provided by Lester

Park and Woodland cars. Through-routing took advantage of the Interstate's existing mileage through downtown Duluth. On the Superior end, service continued to 21st and Grand, with alternate cars for the first time continuing to South Superior. This was longest version of the Interstate, 17 miles from Crosley and 52nd Avenue E. to 63rd and Tower in South Superior. It didn't last, and a year later the Interstate cars were terminating at the newly constructed loops off Superior Street and 14th Avenue E. that served the Armory, Auditorium and Duluth Curling Club.

In 1930 the Interstate line was converted to one-man operation. On the Superior end, an unusual schedule was implemented. Cars from Duluth travelled first to 21st and Grand, returned to 3rd and Ogden, the loop next to the Superior carhouse, then reversed and travelled to South Superior, and finally to Duluth. This lasted until 1931, when the South Superior line on Tower Ave. from 21st Street to 63rd Street was abandoned.

From December 1, 1931 to May 1, 1932 Interstate was once again through routed to East End and Allouez, and again the experiment failed due to poor timekeeping.

The end for streetcars was approaching. In 1934 the Armory loop and Superior Street trackage from 3rd Ave. E. to 24th abandoned, so the Interstate cars terminated at 3rd Avenue E. and Superior. Finally, on June 5, 1935, the Interstate and all remaining Superior lines were abandoned.

The MINNEAPOLIS HORSE RAILROAD

The early history of street railways in Minneapolis is hazy. We know the St. Paul Street Railway opened its first permanent horse car line on July 15, 1872 and the Minneapolis Street Railway followed on September 2, 1875. Russ

Olson recorded these events in *Electric Railways of Minnesota*, but he also listed several earlier attempts at street railways that appear in histories of Minneapolis.

However, now that the historic Minneapolis Tribune has become available and searchable online, we now know more about one of these short-lived operations, the Minneapolis Horse Railroad.

It first appears in a January 7, 1868 Tribune story announcing the company's organization. It describes the railroad as extending "from the Falls to the levee for carrying freight to and from the boats." Further, "The ordinance granting the company right of way through certain streets of the city provides that not less than two miles shall be constructed during the present year."

Street railway construction in the 19th century was a highly speculative business and things seldom happened as initially planned. The December 22, 1869 Tribune reports on the line's opening, but clearly its purpose and location had changed from the original plan. Now the route used Second Street to connect the Milwaukee Road depot at 3rd Avenue S. with the St. Paul & Pacific depot at 4th Avenue N., a distance of half a mile.

"Yesterday witnessed...the formal opening of the Minneapolis Horse Railroad, and the introduction into our city of the first street cars ever brought to the State. For some time the company have been busy in laying the track on the Second street route...near the Milwaukee...railroad depot, up to...near the St. Paul and Pacific depot. This route having been completed and the first street car, which was manufactured by Coan & Ten Broake, Chicago, having arrived, some of the officers of the company, with a number of the prominent citizens, yesterday afternoon took a ride over the road, and formally opened it.

The car with the guests aboard started from Bridge Square, where a large number of people were congregated to

see it, and then went up as far as the Pacific depot, coming into sight of the depot just as the Litchfield train was going out, creating great surprise among the occupants of the train, and was greeted with cheers and waving of hats, which was responded to heartily by those on the car. After a short halt at the depot, the car returned to Bridge square, where more of our citizens got on, and then went to the other end of the route, and back again, making several trips and was crowded each way."

The article goes on to say, "The company commenced yesterday surveying the Washington Avenue route, and they propose going right ahead and lay the track and have it ready for the cars by the first of January." It further speculates that a line on Hennepin Avenue might be built the following year.

Another story says that the Second Street line was double track, and that the Milwaukee Road held the line's mortgage.

The promise to build a line on Washington Avenue was apparently kept, as the January 1, 1870 Tribune says, "The Washington avenue route of the Minneapolis Horse Railroad was formally opened yesterday and the horse car traversed it from one end to the other." It is unclear where the line started and ended. However, it seems likely it ran from the Milwaukee Depot toward Seven Corners.

The man behind the Minneapolis Horse Railroad was Frederick Gilson. Born in Vermont, he came to Minnesota in 1865. With his brother he purchased the Nicollet House, predecessor of the Nicollet Hotel, at Nicollet and Washington Avenues, and reportedly turned it into one of the best hotels in town. He passed away on June 15, 1870 at age 50, from what appeared to be a stroke.

Despite Gilson's death, in September 1870, the Tribune reports that the Horse Railroad "have commenced operations

again." Furthermore the company simultaneously began laying track on Hennepin Avenue from a connection with the existing Second Street line to Tenth Street. That track appears to have been finished, and later abandoned. On September 18, 1871, the paper reported public complaints about the unused track on Hennepin Avenue.

Gilson's death seems to have hastened the demise of the Horse railroad, which wasn't in good financial health to begin with. A Tribune story on July 29, 1871, says that the line on Second Street would be removed shortly. Apparently much of its business was interchanging steam railroad cars between the Milwaukee Road and the St. Paul & Pacific, because the two lacked any other rail connection. Isaac Atwater's 1893 *History of the City of Minneapolis* says, "The chief use (of the Horse Railroad) was a transfer of cars between the two systems of roads. " Once that connection was made along the west bank of the Mississippi, the interchange business disappeared.

In December 1871, it was reported that the Horse Railroad owned a mile of track that was inactive. The City Council tabled a request to remove the track, to give the company a chance to regroup and resume operations.

A story on June 15, 1872 recapped the construction of the Horse Railroad, saying that it had laid a mile of track on Second Street between the two depots. "Cars were run regularly upon this portion of the line for some months. Naturally enough there was no profit to the company in operating so short a route." It goes on to say, "Since the death of Mr. Gilson, there has been no...ardor on the part of stockholders to resuscitate the plan of extension (of the street cars)." Atwater's history agrees that Gilson's passing hastened the line's end.

Thanks to Peter Sussman and Russ Olson for researching this story.



Pete Bonesteel collection.



DULUTH, MINN.

SUPERIOR, WIS.



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM

PO Box 16509
Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509
www.TrolleyRide.org

August 2021

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